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RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 001235

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE. NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2018
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: MASKIYOT: INTERNAL FENCE MOVED OUTWARD

REF: JERUSALEM 347

Classified By: Acting Principal Officer Jessica Lapenn, per reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: PolOff visited the Northern Jordan Valley settlement of Maskiyot July 2 and confirmed reports that the settlers have moved the internal fenceline outward. PolOff observed that this move opens 4-5 dunams for development. Jordan Valley Regional Council Chairman Dubi Tal told PolOff that he intends to sue the GOI in the High Court of Justice (HCJ) to permit more houses at Maskiyot and the neighboring settlements of Rotem and Hemdat. END SUMMARY.

Internal fence moved outward

¶2. (C) PolOff visited the northern Jordan Valley settlement of Maskiyot July 2. Maskiyot settler (also a Gush Katif evacuee) Yossi Chazut showed PolOff where settlers had moved an internal fence line eastward approximately 75 meters to match the settlement's existing outermost perimeter fence. He said the move was in response to threat of sheep theft and had opened 4-5 dunams of land for development.

"Testing the government"

¶3. (C) Maskiyot is the site of six caravans that were installed in January and are inhabited by Gush Katif evacuees. Jordan Valley Regional Council Chairman Dubi Tal told PolOff July 2 that the six caravans are "illegal" under Israeli law, and that he is "testing the government," which he does not "think will destroy them." Tal reiterated his claim that Maskiyot was established by government decision in 1982 as a Nahal pre-military academy with provisions for civilian residence. According to Tal, eleven families from Gush Katif are at Maskiyot, either in the six new caravans or the existing permanent houses.

¶4. (C) Tal said he intends to bring a case against the GOI to the HCJ to allow for construction at Maskiyot and the neighboring settlements of Rotem and Hemdat, arguing that the GOI established the settlements, facilitated their growth, and encouraged settlers to populate the Jordan Valley. He noted that the MOD had recently refused to approve construction of a new sewer system and school.

LAPENN